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Professional Development Through Collaborative Inquiry for an Art Education Archipelago

LESLIE GATES

University of Maryland College Park

The culture of isolation in schools leaves many art educators feeling that they are, in a sense, islands. Working from the idea of an island, I use the geographic metaphor of an archipelago as a means to understand the tensions between isolation and collaboration related to professional development for art educators. In this article, I describe the potential for collaborative inquiry to transform professional learning in art education and discuss the challenges to implementing a collaborative model. I argue that a learner-directed collaborative approach best meets the diverse professional development needs of the art education archipelago and conclude with recommendations for overcoming the obstacles that stand in the way.

Correspondence concerning this article should be sent to the author at Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Maryland College Park, College Park, MD 20742.
E-mail: lgates@umd.edu

My lived experience as an elementary art teacher was very much like being an island. As the only art teacher in the building, I was physically isolated from others like me. The emotional isolation was so real that I initiated a weekly meeting with an art teacher at a neighboring school. In addition to being an island in "form," I was also an island in "function." I was unprepared for the reality that students and staff saw my art classroom as a vacation destination.

The culture of isolation in schools (Little, 2007) leaves many teachers feeling that they are, in a sense, islands. Working from the idea of an island, and acknowledging Clandinin and Connelly's (1995) metaphor of "professional knowledge landscapes," I use the geographic metaphor of an archipelago to describe the field of art education and as a means to understand the tensions between isolation and collaboration related to professional development for art educators.

Archipelago

An archipelago, a group of islands within an expanse of water, has recently been used by Gonzalez (2008) to describe feminist constructions of individual and collective identity. Based on Gonzalez's work, I challenge the idea that we can discuss the professional development of art educators as if art educators are a homogenous group. The term "art educators" is complex and describes a diverse group of individuals. Just as the limits of an archipelago are not fixed, the border that defines who is an art educator is not clear. For instance, artists-in-residence, studio art faculty in departments of higher education, and elementary classroom teachers may all be interested in professional development within art education.

Seeing the field of art education as an archipelago also challenges easily defined borders and promotes a definition of our field that allows for diversity and intersectionality within a collective identity. In other words, understanding our field as an archipelago challenges an assumption that everyone who considers themselves an "art educator" shares identical desires, interests, and needs. This variation is also true of islands within an archipelago. Each island is uniquely shaped and has a unique geographical position. Within the archipelago metaphor, individual islands also exemplify the physical separation of art teachers, but downplay the physical separation when we consider the islands as a group.

The islands within an archipelago drift and move, which further challenges the modern notion that identity has stable borders that are fixed and static. Rather, the islands are free to float. Individual



Figure 1. *Archipelago*. Artwork by Matt Borchert, 2009.

art teacher identities also evolve and drift to different locations within the field of art education. My space within the art education archipelago has drifted from K-12 teaching into a PhD program and new work supporting professional development. As I drift, my proximity (not only geographically, but also pedagogically and emotionally) to other islands changes. The collective identity of the archipelago allows for those of us who fulfill multiple and/or simultaneous roles to still self-define within the field of art education.

The collective and individual aspects of the archipelago metaphor parallel a tension experienced by many art educators concerning their professional development. In the following section, I describe the challenges that arise in the design and implementation of collaborative professional development opportunities for art educators. Based on recent scholarship (Craig & Deretchin, 2009; Fairbanks & LaGrone, 2006; Kooy, 2009; Nelson & Slavitt, 2008; Orland-Barak, 2009), I argue that a learner-directed collaborative approach to professional development can meet the individual needs of a diverse art education archipelago. I conclude with recommendations for overcoming obstacles such as lack of trust, the traditional need for an "expert," and working within an accountability context that potentially stand in the way of implementing a learner-directed, collaborative model for professional development.

Islands

Although many reform efforts have attempted to dissolve the autonomous and isolated nature of teaching, teachers still describe their practice as lonely and isolated. This is especially true for art educators in elementary settings, who are likely to be working as the sole teacher in their discipline within their school setting (Barrett, 2006; Chapman, 2005). To further accentuate feelings of isolation, a number of elementary art teachers teach in more than one school, and therefore, rotate among a number of communities.

I remember the feeling of isolation clearly: I was sitting with the rest of the elementary school faculty listening to an "expert" who had been paid to present various strategies for differentiating math lessons. As the only art educator in the school, I was used to professional development that was not designed for me. At the end of the presentation, the speaker asked if anyone had questions, and a veteran first grade teacher stood up. She looked directly at the principal. With language and a posture that communicated that she was speaking on behalf of everyone, she declared that this was the most relevant professional development that we had received in years. She, apparently, had not considered those of us who did not directly teach mathematics in her declaration of "we."

Survey data collected by various art education researchers (Brewer, 1999; Burton, 1998; Ellis, Shields, Jur, & Spomer, 1980; Jeffers, 1996; Lehr 1981; Sabol, 2006) provide important information about demographics, profiles, and needs of art teachers, all of which have implications for designing and implementing meaningful professional development. The surveys, which report the diverse array of topics art educators desire as content of professional development opportunities, illustrate the diversity of the islands that make up the art education archipelago.

Many art teachers desire professional development that includes artmaking (Brewer, 1999). In an attempt to assess local interest in a graduate level program in art education, Brewer's survey asked teachers to indicate the degree to which they would be interested in certain art education-related courses. Respondents were more than twice as interested in art studio classes (drawing, photography, ceramics, etc.) as they were in content in art history, art criticism, or aesthetics. This illustrates art educators' dual identity as both artists and educators (see Daichendt, 2009) and may indicate a need to find support in balancing a career in education and practice as an artist.

In an attempt to broadly assess needs, issues, and concerns surrounding professional devel-

opment in art education, Sabol's (2006) survey asked respondents (a proportionate sampling of National Art Education Association members by division) to identify "topics about which you would like to learn in professional development experiences." Respondents (n=1790) identified 88 different topics. The most commonly identified topics include curriculum (23%), technology (22%), studio techniques (17%), and assessment (15%). The number of topics (88) and the variation in topics (even among the four most commonly identified) demonstrate the diversity of professional development interests and needs present among art educators. This suggests that we may need to pursue professional development models that allow for a differentiation of topics rather than traditional models that promote a singular, pre-determined content or theme.

School-Based Professional Development

In general, the professional development opportunities offered within school districts are not meeting the surveyed needs of visual art educators (Charland, 2006; Conway, Hibbard, Albert, & Hourigan, 2005; Sabol, 2006). The traditional "top-down" model where administrators choose a topic and hire an "expert" to present a one-time workshop to teachers is still prevalent in today's schools despite research that calls for effective professional development with sustained and participatory formats (Kooy, 2009; Webster-Wright, 2009). A "top-down" model ignores the diverse experiences and needs of teachers by requiring each teacher to sit and passively receive information from an expert, generally without any customization to the teacher's field or identified needs. In addition, the current pressure to increase student achievement scores in reading and math has created a felt need for administrators to improve the quality of reading and math instruction. Thus, the content of professional development has narrowed toward the needs of teachers of tested subject areas. Conway, et al. (2005) paint a picture of what professional development for arts educators looks like, given the policy climate created by the No Child Left

Behind Act of 2001. They argue that, "professional development activities for all teachers have been largely geared toward the 'traditional' academic subject teachers, ignoring the different and sometimes unique needs of art educators" (p. 4). This narrowing of professional development content enforces a hierarchy of subjects (Robinson, 2006) and further marginalizes professional development opportunities for teachers of other subjects, including art educators. For this reason, the professional development opportunities art educators experience within their schools may contribute to feelings of island-like isolation.

Some schools and districts have attempted to create more collaborative professional development through the creation of interdisciplinary teams or professional learning communities. Certainly, art educators can be meaningfully involved in a school-wide improvement and an important part of an interdisciplinary team. An art educator may be very committed to the overall school goals and should be expected to participate in and contribute to professional development opportunities related to the school at large. Because art educators share students with other teachers, it is plausible to think that they may contribute substantially to any assigned group. Stewart and Davis (2007) list art teachers' creativity, knowledge of art materials, and the relative flexibility of an art teacher's curriculum as advantages when working with teachers of other subjects.

However, attempts to promote more collaborative professional development opportunities within schools by creating interdisciplinary teams have not sufficiently resolved the isolation of the art educator. Including art educators as members of interdisciplinary teams creates serious scheduling difficulties—administrators often create common planning time for a grade level team by scheduling students for art, music, or physical education classes. This means that the art educator, even as an official member of the team, is often absent from team meetings. These scheduling difficulties create a situation where art teachers are not able to

participate or be included in all aspects of the team activities (Stewart & Davis, 2007). Additionally, because learning in the arts is almost never the focus of the professional development, grade level groups often do not reciprocate the same level of content-specific feedback to the art educators. For instance, a team consisting of 4th-grade teachers, an art teacher, and a librarian may be asked to identify weaknesses in a piece of student writing and improve student responses on brief constructed response items. The art teacher (and librarian) may be able to meaningfully contribute to this task. However, because the group has been given the task of improving 4th-grade writing, other team members are not then also responsible to provide feedback on a 4th-grade student's sketchbook. This example illustrates a way in which art educators may regularly participate in collaborative professional development that does not connect to the learning that takes place in their classroom. By requiring art teachers to take part in learning communities organized by grade level (or perpetually assign them to a focus or interdisciplinary group), schools do not provide the same quality of content-based professional development to the art teacher that is regularly afforded to other teachers.

Sabol's (2006) study suggests that the majority of art teachers are not having their professional development needs met by their district. Eighty-three percent of Sabol's respondents indicated that their district provided local professional development opportunities, but only 41% agreed that district-sponsored opportunities were beneficial. An additional 19% were undecided. Not surprisingly, then, art teachers who seek out content as well as pedagogical content knowledge often turn to sources outside their school. In this attempt to find meaningful professional development, art teachers begin to navigate the liminal space between islands (Gonzalez, 2008) where rich collaborative possibilities emerge.

Moving Outside the School: Exploring More Collaborative Spaces

Recently, a visual art teacher in Pennsylvania described her appreciation for professional development that allowed her to collaborate with other visual art teachers:

It's been really nice to interact with other art educators because in my situation, even though I work at three different school buildings, I don't interact with any other art educators.... It's been great to share stories and experiences and things we've learned... it's been really valuable to me. (K. Wade, personal communication, April 3, 2009)

Many forms of professional development exist outside school districts and are potential sites for art educators to collaborate. These off-site opportunities often include: professional specialized associations, professional networks, seminars and workshops hosted by non-profit, for profit, and private agencies, and courses offered through colleges and universities (Barrett, 2006). In addition, many less formal spaces exist where teachers have initiated relationships for the purpose of support, sharing, and dialoging about their practice. These formal and informal professional networks, including online opportunities, have the potential to provide the content-based, collaborative opportunities art educators desire.

Art education networks, such as the National Art Education Association, provide professional development opportunities to art educators on national, state, and local levels. Art educators identify these experiences as more beneficial than their school-based experiences, with 70% citing experiences provided by their state art association as beneficial compared to 41% citing experiences provided by their district as beneficial (Sabol, 2006).

Art educators actively seek out these beneficial experiences. Sabol's (2006) survey indicates that 61% of art teachers attend professional development opportunities on weekends, after school, and during the summer. This implies that art educators are traversing the archipelago and looking

for professional development outside their isolated school contexts.

However, art educators face challenges when attempting to access professional development outside their schools. Despite receiving some funding from their schools, 58% of Sabol's (2006) respondents reported that the support they receive to attend professional development experiences is inadequate. When asked about drawbacks to attending professional development opportunities, 35% of teachers' responded that it was "too expensive" (p. 6). Art teachers who attempt to overcome their isolation by attending professional development outside their school district run into the additional obstacles of distance and time. Further compounding problems with funding, 30% cite problems with professional development opportunities being "too far away" (p. 6). Time was another obstacle to attending professional development activities identified by 34% of the teachers in Sabol's study. In addition, art teachers attending professional development outside their districts often do so outside their normal school day when time for professional development is in competition with personal and family responsibilities. Based on the findings from his survey, Sabol observes, "art educators bear the major degrees of responsibility for pursuing their own professional development" (p. 48). These obstacles, though not an exhaustive list, demonstrate the challenges art teachers experience as they attempt to traverse learning spaces outside of their isolated working contexts.

Toward a Collective Identity through Collaborative Inquiry

Because professional networks exist outside teachers' immediate contexts, they have the potential to offer more discipline-specific, collaborative opportunities. Collaborative inquiry, a dialogic process of investigating problems of practice, is emerging as an effective model for learning in K-12 classrooms (Hagaman, 1990, Jennings & Mills, 2009) and for professional development (Craig & Deretchin, 2009; Fairbanks & LaGrone, 2006; Lind,

2007; Nelson & Slavit, 2008). Collaborative inquiry is an archipelago on a small scale. Individual teachers come together as a group, forming a new collective identity. Collaborative inquiry typically involves an ongoing cycle of reflection, inquiry, and action specific to participants' immediate contexts. Built on the belief that learning is active, social, and constructed, collaborative inquiry groups create dialogic and relational learning environments that challenge the traditional model of professional development where "experts" provide teachers with episodic updates (Webster-Wright, 2009).

Collaborative inquiry is the nexus of action research and professional learning communities, which have both gained support within recent professional development scholarship (Yendol-Hoppey & Dana, 2009). Professional learning communities are small groups of educators that meet to connect and learn about their practice through collaboration and dialogue. However, without a shared focus or systematic study, professional learning communities may lack their potentially transformative power. Similarly, teachers who conduct action research often do so in isolation and could benefit from the collaborative nature and support of a community. Collaborative inquiry groups offer teachers support to investigate their problems of practice.

Professional learning communities and action research complement each other nicely due to a number of shared commitments. These commitments include: (a) acknowledging that teaching is complex and requires multiple types of knowledge, (b) voicing problems, issues, tensions, and dilemmas, (c) problematizing teacher practice, (d) and fostering an "inquiry stance" toward teacher practice (Yendol-Hoppey & Dana, 2009, p. 57). These commitments illustrate a shift away from the traditional professional development paradigm that views knowledge as a commodity toward a new paradigm that views knowledge as a social construction situated within specific contexts.

Bridging the two paradigms presents challenges (Kooy, 2009). Ballock (2009) writes, "the task

of replacing traditions of isolation, privacy, and competition with habits of collaboration, collective responsibility, and ongoing inquiry can be a challenging enterprise" (p. 40-41). Rather than the promotion of an individual's knowledge and authority (regularly understood as foundational to teaching), collaborative inquiry requires vulnerability and humility. Kelley, North, and Craig (2009) describe this tension, stating, "it is a challenge to work in the isolation of your classroom... where the teacher is the sole authority and then to turn around and work collaboratively with your colleagues, publicly declaring that you have unresolved questions and are not the authority on all matters" (p. 70-71).

Collaborative inquiry in practice. The archipelago metaphor reveals a parallel between collaborative inquiry and art education, illustrating the collaborative/collective space created when individuals are willing to come together. Based on the similar formation of collaborative inquiry and the field of art education, I propose collaborative inquiry as rich possibility for professional development in art education. As a model, collaborative inquiry allows for learner-directed collaboration that is able to meet the diverse professional development needs of the art education archipelago. Most importantly, teachers can implement collaborative inquiry across school and district lines, a benefit for arts educators who work in isolation.

ArtsEducator 2.0 is a grant-funded initiative that is currently using collaborative inquiry as a professional development model. I briefly share the ArtsEducator 2.0 project in order to demonstrate how collaborative inquiry might be implemented for teachers in the arts and other subject areas who often find themselves isolated within their school building.

ArtsEducator 2.0 structures and supports.

ArtsEducator 2.0 is a professional development opportunity currently serving 40 teachers of visual art, music, dance, and theater within a three-county area in southwest Pennsylvania. ArtsEducator 2.0 is a partnership between Intermediate Unit 1 (a regional education agency) and the Pennsylvania

Department of Education, supported with funding from the U.S. Department of Education and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. You can access ArtsEducator 2.0 on the web at <http://artseducator20.wikispaces.com>.

ArtsEducator 2.0 offers participation in a collaborative inquiry group as a 3-credit Continuing Professional Education (CPE) course registered with the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Arts educators who desire to be a part of ArtsEducator 2.0 complete an application to participate at the beginning of each school year. The application process serves to collect basic information about each applicant and allows ArtsEducator 2.0 to accept all applicants on a first-come, first-served basis. To date, ArtsEducator 2.0 has been able to accept every applicant.

This year, members of the ArtsEducator 2.0 faculty grouped applicants into six collaborative inquiry groups based on information in their application and a variety of other factors.¹ Six times throughout the year, all participants meet together at Intermediate Unit 1. These meetings happen during the regular school day and ArtsEducator 2.0 reimburses districts for substitute costs. In addition to the six ArtsEducator 2.0 meeting days, applicants also meet monthly with their collaborative inquiry group at a variety of locations throughout the three-county area. These meetings generally take place outside of the regular school day. During these meetings, members of the collaborative inquiry group engage in action research about an inquiry theme of their own choosing.

In addition to paying for substitute costs, ArtsEducator 2.0 uses its funding to pay faculty to facilitate the collaborative inquiry groups. The funding also pays for supplies, technological purchases, and Intermediate Unit 1 administrative costs. The Intermediate Unit has provided select "in-kind" contributions in the form of staff time and office resources.

Enacting the Collaborative Inquiry Model

The ArtsEducator 2.0 project has benefited from both public and private grants, an Intermediate

Unit willing to manage the funding, and the support of local school districts and arts agencies. I have found that funding, a manager or director, and the cooperation of local school districts all appear to be necessary supports for teachers to engage in collaborative inquiry across district lines. Admittedly, getting those supports in place is no small task. However, collaborative inquiry as a method for professional development appears to be the real agent of transformation, turning individual, isolated arts educators into a growing professional network in southwestern Pennsylvania. Providing arts educators with the chance to work together across district lines has created space for rich dialogue and meaningful learning.

My experience working with ArtsEducator 2.0 has illustrated many of the benefits and limitations of collaborative inquiry found in the professional development literature. I will highlight a few salient benefits and limitations in order to consider the potential of collaborative inquiry for art educators.

Benefits. Collaboration esteems a multiplicity of diverse voices and seeks to create a conversation space that empowers members to learn with and through each member's experiences. As a result, teachers who are able to interact with teachers from other contexts may have a better understanding of their own context as a result (Nelson & Slavitt, 2008). In addition, collaborative inquiry groups that happen outside a school or district structure can provide teachers a space to voice dilemmas and controversies that the system in which they work often silences (Orland-Barak, 2009).

Collaborative inquiry creates dialogic, collaborative spaces, and encourages teachers to problematize and investigate their practice. Inquiry is an attractive model for professional development in art education because it allows individuals and groups of educators to define and structure their own professional learning.

Not only do collaborative inquiry groups operate to support and transform teacher practice, they also make the transformation of the larger system (in which the collaborative inquiry group

operates) possible. Collaborative inquiry groups exist in places (professional, cultural, societal, etc.) that influence how group members act and interact. The relationships within the group exist in a larger network of relationships, both physical and social. As new understandings surface, collaborative inquiry groups may be more keenly aware of the context in which they exist, including the sociopolitical structures of power at play (Orland-Barak, 2009). As Isaacs (1999) writes, "one of the possibilities of inquiry is becoming aware of the 'sea' in which [teachers] swim, and in doing so, fundamentally alter it" (p. 39). Art education scholars (Cosier, 2004; Darts, 2008) have called for art educators to challenge the structures in which they find themselves. In doing so, these scholars propose an intentional shifting and moving within the art education archipelago.

For example, Cosier (2004) writes, "if we are to craft an art education that is meaningful and relevant to the lives of students, we should focus on developing tools to help them connect to ways of knowing the world that may be alien and/or inaccessible in current school paradigms" (p. 48). Darts (2008) also asks art teachers to stand united as "freedom fighters." He argues, "[s]ignificant institutional and professional change is unlikely to occur without direct intervention, including political lobbying, professional development, and teacher education" (p. 115). Art teachers who hope for a new paradigm in art education may find that the traditional educational system is one of the main barriers to meaningful student learning. Thus, if art educators are committed to meaningful student learning, they must necessarily challenge the structures that stand in the way. Collaborative inquiry groups can begin to investigate these structures and support teachers' efforts to work toward positive change.

Furthermore, collaborative inquiry is valuable because the collegiality it fosters can act as a support when teachers face difficult and challenging situations. Art educators are keenly aware of the ways in which the current educational

policy climate has affected their classrooms. The increased focus on tested subject areas has cut instructional time in other subjects and has further marginalized learning in the arts (McMurrer, 2008). According to Orland-Barak (2009), collaborative inquiry "enhances and sustains a motivated professional community that can withstand the pressures and challenges of accountability and standardization" (p. 23). As art educators face new challenges, collaborative inquiry groups are places of valuable support.

Limitations. Although I have outlined collaborative inquiry as a potentially transformative model for learning in art education, implementing this model does not instantly resolve the challenges (e.g. a lack of time and/or resources) art educators face when attempting to create or access collaborative learning spaces. Realistically, it can create additional challenges. ArtsEducator 2.0 has met challenges in attempting to implement collaborative inquiry. For instance, attempting to get a course approved by a state department in order to offer CPE credit is difficult if you intend to allow teachers to determine the content of their inquiry (i.e., the course). The current professional development regulations in No Child Left Behind have privileged easily standardized professional development experiences that produce measurable outcomes. Collaborative inquiry, which esteems inquiry topics meaningful to teachers' individual contexts and supports diverse outcomes, does not easily align with these regulations. In addition, federal funding comes with reporting requirements such as pre/post-tests and gain scores. Designing a pre-test without knowledge of what teachers might learn is tricky, at best. Thus, the ArtsEducator 2.0 faculty has spent many hours attempting to satisfy requirements of outside agencies while protecting the space necessary for collaborative inquiry to exist.

Collaborative inquiry can require a high level of commitment from participants, especially if it takes place in addition to time required for learning experiences that "count" (i.e., meet criteria for re-certification and other necessary requirements). While

some arts educators in the ArtsEducator 2.0 three-county area elect to participate in ArtsEducator 2.0, others do not. Involvement in the ArtsEducator 2.0 project is optional and teachers participate in their collaborative inquiry group in addition to district-sponsored professional development activities.

Recommendations

The collaborative inquiry model offers opportunities for collaboration, meaningful learning, and may act as a means to challenge unhelpful structures. For these reasons, addressing the challenges is a productive use of our time. I recommend that as a field, we work together toward creating professional development that is meaningful and work to advocate the credibility of these experiences. We must be willing to advocate for meaningful learning opportunities to building administrators, professional organizations, and policymakers.

In addition, art educators who value the rich learning that takes place when they collaborate with others must work to initiate shared professional development experiences. Art teachers can make professional development within their district more meaningful (or negotiate release time, when applicable) by volunteering to be part of planning committees that determine the content and structure of the experiences. Using research about effective professional development (e.g. Barrett, 2006; Hawley & Valli, 2007) can provide common language for art teachers and administrators to discuss and negotiate how the school can best provide meaningful learning experiences for the art educator that also contribute to the school's goal of improving student achievement.

Art educators responsible for designing and implementing professional development programs can promote collaborative inquiry and honor emergent, learner-defined content and, with few concessions, meet requirements from departments of education and funding agencies in order to create learning opportunities that "count" for participants. Those attempting to design inquiry-based experiences, however, must carefully consider the concessions made in order for inquiry

to meet agency requirements. Bieler and Thomas (2009) found that formal programs that attempt to foster "an inquiry stance" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001) often promote *false inquiry* that is fixed, standardized, and methodical. Formal programs adopting an inquiry model will need to guard against mandating a specific topic of inquiry, a procedural inquiry format, and similar "policies" that undermine the learner-defined, emergent content that learning through inquiry promotes. In addition, programs that support learner-defined content must seek ways to work with outside agencies to construct criteria that accurately represent teacher learning.

Furthermore, I recommend that those who are responsible to provide professional development conceptualize their role as a facilitator rather than expert. Collaborative inquiry groups benefit from having a facilitator (Ballock, 2009; Nelson & Slavit, 2008). With an intentional move away from the role of a content provider and toward the role of a facilitator, time previously spent preparing and delivering content can now be spent supporting teachers' inquiry and working to present teachers' professional development as sophisticated and able to meet criteria set by outside agencies. The facilitator can support the group by working to establish a safe space, and can attend to necessary administrative details such as reserving meeting space. Facilitators play a crucial role within group dialogue by "paying attention to themes emerging from the group that have not been articulated by

any single person" (Isaacs, 1999, p. 297). In this way, facilitators extend and expand the group's learning (Bruner, 1985; Vygotsky, 1978).

Building Bridges

The art education archipelago is a place of rich professional learning when we create and sustain structures that bridge distant islands. Weis and Fine (2004) suggest that institutionally and ideologically linking groups that are seemingly separate and isolated requires deep theorizing and analysis. There are difficult tasks before us that require not only deep theorizing and analysis, but also action. Creating spaces for art educators to collaborate is one such task. Institutionally linking those spaces to the formal professional development discourse is another. Both are difficult tasks that require our creative attention and commitment.

Inquiry-based approaches allow individuals and groups of art educators to define and structure their own professional development. The tension between emergent, learner-defined content and attempts to standardize and regulate content are unfading. Rather than become complacent, I encourage art educators to "live the questions" in order to diminish isolation (see McKay, 2006) and to explore ways of building relationships that can positively affect our professional development. It is my hope that we, as an art education archipelago, regularly initiate meaningful professional development opportunities and work actively to represent these opportunities as the rich and sophisticated experiences that they are.

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END NOTE

- ¹ For example, the U.S. Department of Education funding included a stipulation that ArtsEducator 2.0 use federal funds only on behalf of teachers in high-poverty schools. Therefore, in order to manage and account for two separate funding streams, ArtsEducator 2.0 administrators decided it was necessary to group teachers according to whether or not they taught in a school that met the "high poverty" requirement.

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